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2401-75

12 November 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Dirks
Mr. Donnalley
Mr. Lehman
Mr. Taylor
Mr. Wells

SUBJECT : [] Comments

Attached is a note I have received from []
[] reflecting some points she first raised with
me in an oral discussion about our recent opus, by
which she claimed herself most favorably impressed.
As you know, [] is currently the [] and
Pacific area. She came to us from the Department of
State where she has had a distinguished career going
back to wartime work in OSS [] When the
war ended, she stayed with State and became a pillar
[] where she is now one of the most senior profes-
sionals. Her views reflect her background, but I found
them interesting and believe they approach our problem
from a perspective which those of us with Agency and
intelligence backgrounds tend to overlook.

[]
George A. Carver, Jr.
Deputy for National Intelligence Officers

Attachment

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7 November 1975

MEMORANDUM FOR: George Carver

SUBJECT : The State Department and the Community --
Political Intelligence and Analysis

As I promised I would, I have jotted down some of the thoughts I expressed to you earlier about a subject that got very little attention in the Taylor Group report -- the relationship between the State Department and the political intelligence function. What follows is a series of observations on four topics -- collection, analysis, briefing, and expertise. They are neither connected nor are they directed toward any particular conclusions or recommendations. They are merely intended to suggest that, while we are in the process of taking a critical look at ourselves, our roles, and our ways of performing them, this is another subject that needs some systematic study. Again, I emphasize, I am talking only about political intelligence; obviously, the sole support for anything I say below is my own experience. Others may view the problem quite differently, but let us at least recognize that there is a problem.

1. Collection

The Department's important collection responsibilities are fully recognized. Indeed, it is generally agreed that the Foreign Service is our most important collector of human source political intelligence. It is also recognized that there is some disjunction between the requirements of the Community and what is provided by Foreign Service reporting. However, some of the reasons advanced do not entirely hit the mark. The Taylor report, for example (in the footnote to the table facing B-6) says that "FSO's are dedicated more to the ends of foreign policy than to the intelligence requirements as set forth by USIB." If this is just a fancy way of saying that Foreign Service officers are busy doing other things than reporting it is certainly true. But the trouble with the statement is that it seems to imply that intelligence requirements are somehow detached from policy -- a detachment which, to the extent that it exists, we are all trying very hard to reduce. In fact, when FSOs fail to report what they should be

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reporting they are doing just as much of a disservice to the policy maker as to the intelligence analyst -- Embassy Canberra is an excellent current case in point. And when FSOs are reporting what's happening because they think it relates to US foreign policy interests, they are doing exactly what the Community wants them to do and what most of them would like to do a good deal more of. The problem is not a difference of perspective, a failure to pay due attention to the multitudinous ways we have developed of packaging our requirements, or an inability to find just the right way to package them. The Political Section FSO is interested in much the same sorts of things as the political analyst in OCI or INR -- chances are, these days, that he's had a tour in INR. But he is a multipurpose tool; political reporting is only one of his functions. The problem is not so much how to make the FSO political reporter conscious of the interest of political analysts but how to get the system to give more priority to and provide more resources for the political reporting function.

2. Analysis

Whereas the Community recognizes that FSOs abroad are intelligence collectors, recognition that they and their fellows in the policy bureaus at home are also intelligence analysts tends to be subliminal at best. We rarely take conscious note of the fact, for example, that when we criticize our Embassies abroad for not doing more in-depth political analysis (a criticism more frequent in my experience than complaints that they are sending back insufficient political data), we are criticizing them for their failure to perform an intelligence function. Especially in Washington, foreign service analysis may be more oriented toward (although not necessarily distorted by) some immediate policy purpose. But again, the most significant difference lies not in the kind of political analysis they do but in the amount of time they have to devote to it.

3. Briefing

I speak here of the daily publications only insofar as they are intended to provide the Secretary and other high officials at State with quick, informed, and readable coverage of current political developments. In this area and for these officials, the dailies may have become redundant. For a long time the Agency's physical facilities and its organization for this function gave it a substantial advantage over INR. Xerography and altered INR procedures have changed this. The INR briefing product remains physically much cruder than the Agency's. But it is produced twice a day and,

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I'm told by INR, the afternoon edition is now scooping the newspaper fairly regularly, particularly on hot subjects, with the expectation that it will do even better when the TDs start reaching State electrically. Finally, INR has some built-in advantages -- it has closer contacts, if not with the principals, at least with those who are in contact with the principals, and it gets more feedback.

4. Expertise

When the Research and Analysis Branch of OSS was being organized, the Foreign Service was extremely small and its expertise in foreign politics -- especially in non-European countries -- was very limited. The expertise the government needed had to be recruited from among academics, emigres, missionaries and the like or trained on the job. The expertise that remained when the war was over was largely inherited by INR and CIA. And ever since, we have tended to think of the Community as the home not only of the detached but also of the expert. In the political field this is becoming increasingly less true. In the foreign political field, expertise has been on the rise in the Foreign Service and on the decline in the Intelligence Community. A large proportion of the officers in State's regional bureaus at any given time are likely to have served in the country with which they are dealing, to know the language, and to have had the opportunity to deal first hand with the policy makers and shapers. Moreover, there is a growing disparity between the current information available to the intelligence analyst and the desk officer in the latter's favor. The desk officer is likely to be fully cleared and have available to him all the messages available to us. Even if he doesn't see all of the Nodiss-type traffic, he sees a good deal more of it than we do. And in his daily dealings with other agencies, with his own superiors, and with foreign officials he picks up information relevant to political problems that never gets into the paper stream at all.



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